

# Best Practices to Follow When Writing a Memoir

*This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:*  
[Don't Make These 7 Mistakes When Penning Your Memoir](#)

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Don't try to cover too much in your memoir. Pick a key event in your life and cover the time leading up to and immediately after the event.

Remember that you can write multiple memoirs over the course of your life. In fact, you should.

Focus on the lesson that you've learned. This will help you connect with the reader and make your story more valuable to him or her.

If you're not sure how to begin your memoir, write a short story focused on one event. Then, expand that story into a memoir.

Don't start your memoir at birth because it will take too long to get to the main event of your story, and it's most likely not your own memory anyway. Start at a place of action that immediately grabs the reader's attention.

Remember that you're sharing your experience with the reader, so you should write your story with him or her in mind.

Outline your story to avoid rambling and distraction. Your outline can be as detailed or as simple as you'd like. The outline should keep you on track as you write.

Protect yourself from lawsuits by changing the names and identifying characteristics of those who may be less than flattered by your portrayal of them.

If possible, have all parties that you intend to discuss in your memoir sign a release form.

Don't forget to edit. Your first draft is just that— *first*. You'll need to polish your story into something relatable to your reader.

After you've edited your story, send it off for a professional manuscript critique. Here, a professional (objective) editor will help you tighten up the story and make it more cohesive.